

presence of these Mockingbirds. The fact that they were a breeding pair, however, suggests deliberate migration and so late in the season as to derive no guidance from the normal spring movement. This idea is suggested by the breeding Dickcissels that I have found here. One afternoon, in early June, 1899, I searched some ten acres of neglected land that had been my favorite collecting grounds in 1890. There were few, if any, Dickcissels present for I saw none. This was on P. C. 405 and within the present city limits of Detroit. I happened to be in the neighborhood on July 30 and was at once attracted to this field by the songs of about a dozen males and later estimated the colony to consist of fifteen pairs. They never returned to that locality and, with the exception of one bird in Monguagon Township and two in Fairview Village in 1904, none were seen until 1906. Practically all my spare time in 1906 was devoted to a portion of Grosse Pointe Farms and Township and probably the male noted June 10 was the first arrival, and the first female was seen June 24. Three nude young in the nest were located July 29, and a female was flushed from her three eggs August 5. In 1907 I first visited this locality June 30 but found only one pair and their nest containing two fresh eggs. Three additional pairs were present July 7, which was my last visit until 1909-10 when not a bird could be found there nor anywhere in the county.

On consulting available data regarding Mockingbirds breeding north of their normal range I find that from one to several pairs would nest in some locality for a season or two and then disappear, exactly as did the two above colonies of Dickcissels, which seems to place both species here in the class of irregular invaders. Time will probably show that the present occurrences of Mockingbirds in the north are efforts in the direction of permanent summer residence. Last summer was unusually dry and warm here and our local pair may have traveled the whole distance through conditions not materially different from those in their normal range.—J. CLAIRE WOOD, *Detroit, Mich.*

Townsend's Solitaire in Eastern South Dakota.—A specimen of *Myadestes townsendi* was closely observed at Vermillion, extreme south-eastern South Dakota, on January 9, 1911. Having observed this species at several localities, from Alaska to Arizona, I have not the slightest doubt as to the identification. This species breeds sparingly in the Black Hills, and this individual may have been driven here by a severe west wind which prevailed during the first week of the month.—STEPHEN SARGENT VISHNER, *State University, Vermillion, S. D.*

A Remarkable Number of Robins in Maine in Winter.—The winter of 1910-1911 was rather steadily cold in southern Maine. December and January brought little snow, and the ground was bare most of the time during those months; but in February much snow fell. Nearly if not quite throughout the season there were many more Robins in Portland and its

neighboring towns than are to be expected there in winter, and their abundance for a part of the time appears unprecedented. Reports of the birds began to reach me early in December, but Miss Caroline M. Stevens, of Portland, whose father's house occupies a site especially favorable for observation, tells me that she noticed unusual numbers late in November as well as afterwards. On December 31 I found a least twenty-five feeding in some open lots in the Western Promenade section of the city. The next day I counted more than a hundred scattered about the same lots, in hedges, in the trees of an old orchard and on the ground; there were not less than a hundred and twenty-five of them. On each of the five succeeding days I found an equal number in the same locality. There were but forty in evidence on January 6, but on January 7 there were more than two hundred concentrated within a distance of a hundred yards on Arsenal Street, while several dozen others were grouped in trees not far away. On January 8 and 9 this large flock was still in the neighborhood. Then a week passed in which I could not find a single individual, though I made a search daily of the district previously frequented by the birds. On January 17 a flock of twelve appeared on Arsenal and Bramhall Streets. For the subsequent ten days my record was as follows, the birds always occurring in the same part of the city:

January 18, twelve birds.

" 19, none.

" 20, fourteen birds.

" 21, ten birds.

" 22, two birds.

" 23, twelve birds.

" 24, none.

" 25, none.

" 26, eleven birds.

" 27, eleven birds.

Ten days now elapsed during which I saw none. On February 6, however, I came upon a small flock — perhaps half-a-dozen birds — at the corner of Free and South Streets, in the center of the city. They were moving through the tops of tall elms and did not long remain in sight. A good deal of fruit was still left on some of the mountain ash trees; but, in spite of frequent search within the limits of Portland, I could find no more birds until February 25, when I discovered one in the Western Cemetery.

In the meantime from many points near the city reports had continued to come to me of the presence of great numbers of Robins. The newspapers had also taken up the subject. I heard directly from trustworthy persons in Scarboro, Cape Elizabeth and Old Orchard and on Cushing's, Peaks and Great Chebeague Islands. The largest flocks were generally said to contain from thirty to forty birds, but I was told of one on Cape Elizabeth of one hundred or more and one on Cushing's Island of fully two hundred. The main body apparently withdrew from all these places before or about

the middle of January, as was the case in the city. Nevertheless Mr. Robert T. Sterling, of Peaks Island, reported a flock of thirty or forty on February 19.

The food of the birds which I watched in Portland consisted mainly of mountain ash berries. The trees were heavily laden with fruit, this year, and there are at least fifteen of them in the Western Promenade section, which may be roughly estimated as covering fifty acres. A fine buckthorn hedge was soon stripped of an abundant crop of berries: in fact the Robins ate these with evident preference. They appeared not to like barberries, of which they might have had an ample supply; only once did I see any birds testing them, and then but a few. Suet and other contributions of sympathetic householders were untouched so far as I observed, and no attention was paid to nests of the brown-tail moth.

The sexes were about equally represented amongst the birds. No other species associated with them; but on January 9 I saw several of them attacked and vigorously chased about by English Sparrows. The large flocks were restless and noisy; the small flocks of later date were sluggish and usually silent.—NATHAN CLIFFORD BROWN, *Portland, Maine.*

Winter Ranges of Geese on the Gulf Coast; Notable Bird Records for the same Region.—

The writer noted in the July, 1910, Auk, the fact that Blue Geese (*Chen carulescens*) were very abundant in the Mississippi Delta and the vicinity of Vermillion Bay, La. Further field work under authorization of the Biological Survey during the present winter shows that this is the only part of the Gulf Coast that is visited by large numbers of this species. At Cameron, La., further west they were numerous November 28 to December 6, 1910, but over-shadowed in numbers by both Canada and Snow Geese, while at Gum Cove in the southwestern part of Cameron Parish, La., they were scarce, only a few being seen now and then among the Snow Geese. The writer saw two here January 2. One was seen at Lake Surprise near Galveston, Texas, December 12, 1910, and two at Matagorda, Texas, December 21.

These observations are in harmony with previous records of the occurrence of the Blue Goose, and point to the following conclusions: the center of abundance of the species is a narrow strip extending along the coast of Louisiana from the Delta of the Mississippi to a short distance west of Vermillion Bay. To the eastward the bird is known only as a straggler, and to the west it diminishes gradually in numbers, being scarce on the extreme western coast of Louisiana and rare on the Texas coast.

Passing to the Snow Goose (*Chen hyperboreus*) it was noted in 1910 that in the Mississippi Delta and Vermillion Bay regions, there was one Snow Goose to about each 25 Blue Geese, and that the Snow Geese formed no flocks of their own. At Cameron, La., during the present season (Nov. 28–Dec. 6, 1910) they were abundant, and at Gum Cove (Jan. 2–5, 1911) they were very abundant. Flocks containing many thousands were seen daily in this locality. The species was common at Lake Surprise (Dec.